



South Mountain Corridor Study

Citizens Advisory Team
Meeting Summary

Date: October 4, 2007
Time: 5:30 p.m.
Location: South Mountain Community College

CAT Members Attending:

Laurel Arndt, Ahwatukee Village Planning Committee
Sandy Bahr, Sierra Club
Eric Baim, Silverado Ranch HOA
Lisa Bray, South Mountain/Laveen Chamber of Commerce
Al Brown, AzPHA
Tamela Daniels, South Mountain Village Planning Committee
Peggy Eastburn, Estrella Village Planning Committee
Michael Goodman, Phoenix Mountains Preservation Council
Don Jones, Southwest Valley Chamber of Commerce
Derrick Denis, Foothills Reserve HOA
Michael Norton, Laveen Village Planning Committee
Dave Olney, Valley Forward
Laurie Prendergast, Laveen Citizens for Responsible Development
John Rodriguez, Lakewood HOA
Jack Sellers, East Valley Partnership
Brian Smith, Calabrea HOA
Timothy Stone, Bougainvillea HOA
Carola Tamarkin, Ahwatukee Foothills Chamber of Commerce
Terry Tatterfield, Kyrene Elementary District
Jim Welch, Mountain Park Ranch HOA

CAT Members Absent:

Camilo Acosta, Arlington HOA
Gila River Indian Community – District 4
Chad Blostone, The Foothills HOA
Clayton Danzeisen, Maricopa County Farm Bureau
David Lafferty, City of Tolleson
Jim McDonald, City of Avondale
Nathaniel Percharo, Pecos Road/I-10 Landowners Association
Dave Williams, Arizona Trucking Association

Staff and Consultants

Timothy Tait, ADOT
Mark Hollowell, ADOT
Michael Bruder, ADOT
Velvet Li, ADOT
Bill Vachon, FHWA
Roger Herzog, MAG

Amy Edwards, HDR
Heather Honsberger, HDR
Mike Book, HDR
Bill Vachon, FHWA
Ron Ober, PDG
Dean Howard, PDG
Joy Butler, PDG
Fred Erickson, KCA
Tom Keller, KCA

Citizens:

Donna Carpenter
Tim Cornelivs
Steve Erickson
Andrew Frankhogo
Jim Jochim
Cathy & Rudy Martinez
Scott Mittelsteadt
Doug Murphy (Ahwatukee Foothills News)
Jay Pate
William Ramsay
Greta Rogers
Stephanie Russo
Alice Wells

Task/Activity	Who
EIS Process	Mark Hollowell, ADOT
Regional Project Overview	Roger Herzog, MAG
Tank Farm Shift Review of E1 Impacts	Amy Edwards, HDR
Bus Tour Presentation	Tim Tait, ADOT
Visitor Comment Section	Tom Keller, KCA

Tom Keller: Thanks for joining us on a stormy night. We have a full agenda. There are a couple of housekeeping items to mention before we begin.

The trashcans are located by the door and in the corner of the room.

Also, it is important to note that there are many people who work hard to put these meetings together. Please raise your hand if you are a member of the study team from HDR Engineering or Policy Development Group.

On April 15, the Citizens' Advisory Team agreed on the protocol that will govern these meetings. Tonight, our CAT member attendance is 14 people. We have a quorum. Due to time constraints, it has been agreed that these meetings will closely follow the agenda and timeline. I also ask that everyone attending this meeting tonight show respect to the other meeting attendees. Finally, questions from the public will need to be written on the blue question-and-answer cards, which Joy has at the front desk. We make time at the end of each of these meetings so that we can read and answer the public questions.

There have been some requests to see the South Mountain flyover video, which was presented at the last meeting. We have brought that video and it will be running during the break for anyone who wishes to see it.

With that said, we are ready to begin.

Are there any questions from the CAT members that have come about since our last meeting?

(No questions came from the CAT members.)

Now, please take a look at tonight's agenda. Are there any questions on any of the agenda items?

(No questions came from the CAT members.)

As you can see, the first agenda item is a presentation from Mark Hollowell with ADOT's Environmental Planning Group, who will be discussing the contents of a typical Environmental Impact Statement or EIS.

Mark Hollowell: I am Mark Hollowell. I will try to get through everything quickly because I know that some of you would like to watch the baseball game.

I would like to make you familiar with the National Environmental Policy Act process. The United States Congress enacted the National Environmental Policy Act, or NEPA, in 1969. The law applies only to federal agencies and the programs they fund. Essentially it requires that, prior to taking any major or significant action, the agency must consider any environmental impacts of that action. NEPA requires that an EIS must include: the environmental impacts of the proposed action; unavoidable adverse environmental impacts; alternatives including no action; the relationship between short term uses of the environment and maintenance of long-term ecological productivity; irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources; and secondary/cumulative effects of implementing the proposed action. During the development of the EIS, public involvement is an important component.

As you know, this is a federal project and it has been determined that this project will require the development of an EIS. The EIS considers potential project impacts that the action will have on the social, economic, and physical environment. It includes

interagency cooperation and public participation as fundamental objectives to this process. And the EIS documents the potential project impacts and mitigation measures.

This next slide shows all the policies, standards, and acts, which must be considered to ensure that the EIS will be in compliance with NEPA regulations. We are calling this the “NEPA Compliance Umbrella”. As you look at the “Umbrella”, you begin to understand how comprehensive the EIS must be.

There are three levels of NEPA documentation. Categorical Exclusions, or CEs, are developed when the proposed action does not significantly affect the environment. Environmental Assessments, or EAs, are developed when the significance of the proposed action is not yet known. EIS are developed when it is known that there will be a significant effect at some level. An EIS is being developed for the proposed South Mountain Freeway because it is known that there will be significant impacts. All of these documents, CEs, EAs, and EISs, are all evaluating the same issues—air quality, hazardous materials, and cultural impacts, for example.

The next slide shows what information is contained in a typical EIS. There is an established purpose and need, Section 4(f) evaluation, and a list of agencies, organizations, and persons to whom copies of the EIS are sent. For the South Mountain Freeway EIS, it is safe to assume that there will be a section documenting all communication with the Gila River Indian Community.

The EIS process began with scoping of various agencies to ask them their thoughts on the proposed project. Based on information gathered during the scoping process, the study team then established the purpose and need. After the identification and evaluation of alternatives, 55th Avenue was identified as ADOT’s recommended alternative in the Western Section. In the Eastern Section, as you know, the purpose of this CAT is to evaluate the Pecos Road alignment and the no-build option.

The Draft EIS has been through several reviews with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG). Both agencies have been giving us comments on the Draft. Most recently, the document was sent to the FHWA’s Arizona Division for a final review before it will be sent to their Legal Sufficiency Division in San Francisco.

There is a big list of environmental consequences that is taken into account when developing the EIS. Many of these issues are addressed in the CAT meetings for your review. The technical documents for the analysis are available online on the South Mountain Freeway Web site. Some of the items addressed are air quality, floodplains, hazardous materials, cultural resources, and economic issues.

The status of the EIS is as follows:

- 2005—ADOT and FHWA compiled data into the technical reports
- 2006—ADOT and FHWA worked to develop the Administrative Draft EIS
- 2007—ADOT, FHWA, and MAG reviewed the Administrative Draft EIS

- most recently ADOT submitted the Draft EIS to FHWA's Arizona Division

If there are changes from FHWA's Legal Sufficiency Division, the Draft will be sent back to FHWA's Arizona Division and eventually make its way back to ADOT. At this time, ADOT will prepare the Draft EIS for public review. When the Draft is ready for public review, CDs and printed copies will be made available at ADOT, local libraries, and several FedEx/Kinko's locations. According to federal law, the Draft EIS will have a minimum public review period of 45 days. Two public hearings will be held, each of which will be at a different location in the study area with at least 15 days notice to the public. The public hearings will be announced through mailings to the project mailing list, newspaper notices, and information on the project Web site. At the end of the public comment period, ADOT and FHWA will begin addressing the comments and preparing the Final EIS.

In addition to the content already addressed in the Draft EIS, the Final EIS will also incorporate several things. It will identify the recommended alternative for the entire corridor. It will include all substantive public and agency comments received during the comment period. It will summarize all public involvement activities. It will describe any mitigation measures needed based on public and agency comments received. And it will discuss compliance with all applicable environmental laws and executive orders.

ADOT will then submit the Final EIS to FHWA for a final legal sufficiency review. If approved, FHWA will sign and date the cover page. A Record of Decision, or ROD, would be issued by FHWA no sooner than 30 days after of the Final EIS notice in the *Federal Register*. The ROD will identify whether the build or no-build alternative is selected, or if more analysis is needed.

At this time, are there any questions?

CAT Question: I am confused. If you have already compiled the Draft EIS, where does the CAT fit into the process?

Mark Hollowell: The purpose of this CAT is to make the recommendation for the Eastern Section of this proposed freeway—whether the freeway should be constructed on the Pecos Road alignment or if it should be a no-build situation. After the Draft EIS has been released for public review, the recommendation from the CAT and substantive public comments will be evaluated and will be considered in the Final EIS.

CAT Comment: I don't like your answer. This sounds like a moot point. You aren't going to substantially change the Final EIS. We might give a different recommendation that could be dismissed.

Mark Hollowell: Everything is considered. We aren't dismissing any items. We will be soliciting input from the public on the Draft EIS as well as any other issues they might have. ADOT is evaluating the impact of a no-build situation and how this would affect the purpose and need.

CAT Question: How do you know you have evaluated the full range of alternatives?

Mark Hollowell: ADOT originally evaluated over 30 alternatives to get to the point where we are now.

CAT Question: What is a “substantive” comment?

Bill Vachon: All comments received are addressed and taken into consideration—some comments have more information while others are pointed. Those comments that identify specific issues take more time to evaluate. But all comments are addressed.

CAT Question: Earlier in this project, I seem to remember a mathematical error in a conclusion that was reached by ADOT. How is this addressed?

Bill Vachon: If there are any errors, we need to know about it. Any errors will be addressed.

CAT Question: Are we going to get the Draft EIS anytime soon?

Mark Hollowell: We don’t know exactly. The review process has so many variables that at this point the date can’t be determined. FHWA’s Legal Sufficiency Division has told the study team that they cannot estimate the timeframe for their review of the Draft EIS until they have a copy of it in their hands. Because of this, we just don’t know the timeframe. So at this time, we are estimating it to be released for public review at some point in 2008.

CAT Question: I think what that CAT member is trying to say is that one of the slides that was just shown to us shows that there is a large amount of content that will be included in the Final EIS. There was nothing that gives us an idea about the content located in the Draft EIS besides the formatting of the document. The CAT is lacking on most of the technical reports, such as the environmental comments on air quality and noise. If we haven’t seen this information, then how is this information already located in the Draft EIS?

Mark Hollowell: All technical reports go into the Draft EIS. ADOT has been giving the summaries of the draft reports to you. In the Draft EIS, all the information that is given covers each issue in great detail.

CAT Comment: From what I have seen on the air quality issue, the information was not sufficient. I am antsy to see the Draft EIS chapter that covers this issue. The CAT hasn’t been shown anything on the possible design of this potential freeway. The community wants to see more from a design standpoint. How that is going to be addressed and the impact on the mountain will be interesting to see. I haven’t received any substantive answers on my concerns so I am a little leery about what will be contained in the Draft EIS.

Amy Edwards: What I would like to do now is talk about what you want to hear and what your timeframes are. Some of the items that we will be discussing in upcoming CAT meetings include the topics in which you are interested. The design issues will need to be discussed in one whole meeting. This meeting will cover the tunneling issues versus open cut and what the area affects would be. Wildlife connectivity is also an issue regarding design. At that point, the CAT would have a discussion on those issues. When we discuss air quality, ADOT is going to arrange to have a general panel of specialists at a CAT meeting, where you will be able to get some of your questions answered. It is planned that this would need to be after the issuance of the Draft EIS. Then you will get all of the technical information. After the Draft EIS is released to the public, the CAT will be able to discuss anything in the document.

CAT Question: Are you talking about the Draft EIS that is currently with FHWA's Arizona Division?

Amy Edwards: Yes.

CAT Question: So what went to FHWA did not include all of this information?

Amy Edwards: All of the information was included in the Draft EIS and did go to FHWA. There are legal issues with releasing the information that has been included in the Draft EIS until it is ready for the public to review. In the Draft EIS, the Westside Section recommendation is for 55th Avenue, but there is not a recommendation for the Eastern Section. ADOT is using ongoing communication with the CAT and the public to see what else may be incorporated.

CAT Comment: You keep inferring that we have looked at the technical data when the CAT was reviewing the Western Section. But at that time, all the data on the Eastern Section was withheld. You can't say that this group has made any decisions on this. When we make our decision it doesn't go to FHWA—it only goes to the Director of ADOT and he waits for the politicians to tell him what to do.

Amy Edwards: You can recommend your selected alternative to whomever you wish to send your recommendation. By the way, there have been projects, where input on the Draft EIS resulted in identification of a different alternative as the recommended one in the Final EIS.

CAT Question: Can you give us an example of this?

Amy Edwards: Legacy Parkway is one example.

CAT Comment: In the summary document that you gave us at the last CAT meeting, I have issues about where you got the wording for the Eastern Section alternative. If this is the identical wording that was used in the Draft EIS, I have major concerns. Some of the Eastern Section issues are downplayed and is reported that there are no impacts. I can't

believe that this item was published and given to us as a draft when there are obvious conflicts.

Amy Edwards: That is an agenda item for later tonight. Please hold your question for later.

Tom Keller: At this time, please make a note of any further questions you may have.

I have a couple of housekeeping items. There is one person sitting in on behalf of another member. (Person introduced). Thank you for joining us. Is there anyone else who is here representing another regular CAT member?

(No response came from the CAT members.)

At this point we have another presentation by Roger Herzog, who will be discussing the Regional Transportation Plan.

Roger Herzog: I am Roger Herzog, a project manager with MAG. I am here to give you an overview on the Regional Transportation Plan and how it works with the proposed South Mountain Freeway corridor.

The Regional Transportation Plan, or RTP, covers a 20-year planning horizon. In fact, it covers a great number of items, such as traffic system operations, intelligent transportation systems, and safety. It is usually identified with improvements to the transportation system itself.

The long-range regional freeway plan includes new corridors, such as Loop 303, State Route 801, and Williams Gateway Freeway. It also includes adding lanes to existing freeways, both general purpose and high-occupancy vehicle. There are also plans for adding new traffic interchanges on existing freeways that would connect with arterial streets and ramps at various locations, such as between Interstate 17 and Interstate 10. There is currently a traffic interchange at State Route 51 and Loop 101 that is under construction.

The RTP calls for improvements to Interstate 10 from State Route 85 to Loop 303. The stretch from Verrado Way to Loop 303 funding was advanced by the State Legislature in 2006 and should be starting construction shortly. Also between Loop 303 and Loop 101, there will be the addition of a high-occupancy vehicle lane and a general purpose lane so this stretch will contain four general purpose lanes and one high-occupancy lane in each direction. Along I-10, there are plans to add an additional general purpose lane in each direction from Loop 101 to Interstate 17. In the East Valley, looking at Interstate 10 at the stretch from U.S. 60 to the Loop 202, the RTP calls for the addition of a general-purpose lane and a high-occupancy vehicle lane in each direction. On the stretch from Loop 202 to Riggs Road, one general purpose and one high-occupancy lane will be added. There is also a project in the works to create a better design that will allow traffic that is exiting and entering along Interstate 10 and U.S. 60 to flow better.

Looking at some of the other facilities in the Valley, the Loop 303 will be a totally new facility that will be constructed from Interstate 17 to the proposed State Route 801. State Route 801 itself is called for in the RTP. Loop 202 on the east side of Interstate 10 will also be improved with one general purpose and one high-occupancy vehicle lane in each direction.

The current traffic system, as you can see, is going to be improved quite a bit. The Southwest Valley has quite a bit of new corridors plus the widening of existing freeways.

The RTP contains long-range planning for the arterial street system. These projects are funded from regional section sources such as local governments and Maricopa County. These include things like the widening of arterial streets, intersection improvements, signal timing, and traffic control. A few of these projects include major upgrading, such as the widening of Northern Avenue and the construction of the Rio Salado Parkway.

The RTP includes plans for an expanded transit system. Shortly, 31 Rapid Transit bus routes will be added into the transportation system. There will also be Rapid Transit bus routes added to the arterial street system that will make less stops so that people can get to their destinations faster. It is planned that over the next 5 years, 11 of these Rapid Transit arterial bus routes will be added. This slide shows the 32 arterial bus routes, which will be implemented in the Valley over the next 20 years. Most of these additional routes are in service already. The key things that this bus system would provide is service on a reliable basis. Since this funding is on a regional basis, it could be delayed if there were local funding issues.

Lastly, the Valley will have the addition of the light rail system. On the slide, the red component system is under construction now. It is estimated that in December of 2008, it will be available for the public to begin using. There is also planning for an additional 37 miles of light rail extensions, which will allow users more areas in which to use the light rail system.

Other studies that MAG is currently completing are: a commuter rail study on such corridors as Grand Avenue and along the current Union Pacific rail line in the Southwest Valley, the Transportation Framework Study, the Interstate 10/Hassayampa Study, and the Interstate 8/Hidden Valley Study. Most of these studies will be completed shortly and are a joint effort to identify the future network of transportation facilities. In many of these areas, MAG is coordinating with developers so that the Valley transportation system can stay ahead of the development. Right now, many of the areas that MAG is looking into are not heavily populated, but are experiencing much development pressure.

Are there any questions?

CAT Question: There are over 600 homes in Ahwatukee, which seems to be excluded from the maps [bus rapid transit] you just showed us. Why is this? How can I change that?

CAT Comment: It appears that the Town of Laveen has been left out as well.

Roger Herzog: What I have shown has the informational grid plus the regional transportation system map. I couldn't guarantee what the nature of the service would be. I can follow up on your question.

CAT Question: Can you address the pedestrian and bicycle aspects of the RTP?

Roger Herzog: The RTP has an element, which is a regional bicycle plan. The specific funding has been identified over the 20-year timeframe for adding facilities for bicyclists and pedestrians.

CAT Question: Will the funding dollar amount be increasing over time?

Roger Herzog: Yes, the funding is locked in for the next 20 years.

CAT Question: Has the Gila River Indian Community been participating in the development of the RTP?

Roger Herzog: There are members from the Gila River Indian Community who belong to MAG's Regional Council. There has been contact with them so that their input has been incorporated into the RTP.

CAT Question: At last month's CAT meeting, it was stated that the Gila River Indian Community wasn't taken into account when doing the planning for the RTP.

Roger Herzog: The RTP has taken into account such issues as population and employment on the Gila River Indian Community lands so there isn't a gap in the planning.

CAT Comment: At the last meeting, we were told that the Gila River Indian Community has not released their development planning to MAG. So in their case, MAG had to use zero as the basis for the data.

Bill Vachon: What was said at the last meeting was that if the Gila River Indian Community doesn't give us their planning information, we can't speculate what will be going on with their growth. We may use the current population numbers but we can not make any assumptions as to where their development might occur.

CAT Comment: That's what I am saying. MAG can't guess where their development will occur so they are using zero for the data.

Bill Vachon: We can't tell them to give us the information. They have to voluntarily give us the information we use.

CAT Question: Do you all have a copy of what information the Gila River Indian Community has given to assist in the planning for the RTP? They have given it to Intel and others.

Bill Vachon: I don't have a copy of the information.

Roger Herzog: I am not sure if we have one.

CAT Question: What about the growth in Casa Grande? Has Pinal County given you their current data? There are no business centers south of the Valley so that everyone who has a job has to make the drive along Interstate 10 into Maricopa County, unless the people want to work at Jack in the Box.

Hunt Highway is another crowded stretch that people travel daily to get to work. One time at Hunt Highway and Power Road, I counted 300 cars, while waiting at a stoplight. All of those people have to feed into the transportation system to get to work. The Town of Gilbert may have certain roads that they want to make better, but it appears that Val Vista Drive isn't one of them.

Roger Herzog: The RTP doesn't represent all the local needs.

CAT Comment: All drivers get off on the streets that they need to access where they live. It seems that many of these local street improvements are not being upgraded by anyone. I don't think their numbers are being reflected in your data.

Roger Herzog: The commuter data is part of our modeling database. With the anticipated growth in Pinal County, the modeling is taking into account a population of 900,000 people in Pinal County.

CAT Question: Did you tell your computers that all those people go to Maricopa County for work?

Roger Herzog: It is estimated that a certain percentage would be traveling to Maricopa County for work each day.

CAT Question: If the CAT recommendation for the South Mountain Freeway is no-build would MAG consider doing enhanced transit options for the area? What would be the process?

Roger Herzog: I wouldn't want to conjecture on this. The RTP funding has already been designated with a specific amount of money to be funded for specific portions of the RTP. To move money around at this point would not be possible.

CAT Comment: It would be possible to move the money, but you would have to change the law.

Roger Herzog: Yes.

Tom Keller: Roger Herzog's PowerPoint presentation that you just viewed is not in your packet. It will be published on the project Web site and can be sent to you as well, if you request it.

We are now ready for our break. When we come back, we will be discussing the tank farm shift and its impacts on the project.

(BREAK)

Tom Keller: Has anyone seen Clayton recently? Last I had heard, he was awaiting the birth of his grandchild. Has anyone heard any information on this?

(No response came from the CAT members.)

Tom Keller: In a minute, Amy Edwards will be discussing the tank farm shift with you. First, I wanted to mention that we currently have 14 people confirmed for the October 20 bus tour of the South Mountain Freeway study area.

CAT Comment: I originally put a question mark as to whether I would be attending, but now I am sure that I will be attending.

Tom Keller: I will be taking another tally shortly to confirm attendance.

Fred Erickson: The flyover aerial video will be on the Web site shortly for anyone who wishes to access it.

Amy Edwards: Earlier in tonight's meeting I mentioned the future CAT meeting topics. I have the information on this sheet that I am passing around. This is the current plan, but the agendas for these future meetings are completely up to you. If you see something that you think should be discussed, but you don't see it on this list, be sure to let us know. As you can see, the current plan for the next meeting is to discuss traffic, the following meeting we will be discussing the profile options, and the final meeting we will have a discussion about general air quality. Around the third or fourth meeting from now is when the Draft EIS should be ready to be released to the public for review. Each of the CAT members will receive a copy. This document will contain the details on the Eastern and Western sections and the no-build.

CAT Question: When we receive the Draft EIS, will the public have it as well or will we be getting copies in advance?

Amy Edwards: For legal reasons, the public will have access to this document when you receive your copies.

CAT Question: Will this open up the discussion for the Western Section?

Amy Edwards: It depends what you mean by discussion. ADOT is always taking public comment, but as far as this group is concerned, in the Western Section, 55th Avenue is the alternative. This CAT is convened to discuss the Pecos Road Alternative versus the no-build.

CAT Question: If the Draft EIS is delayed again, will we continue having these meetings?

Amy Edwards: All the details for the air quality issues are described in the Draft so we would need to wait to discuss issues, such as this, until you all can review it. We would like you to have an opportunity to review the contents of the Draft EIS before we hold discussions on these types of issues.

CAT Question: Why can't we have discussions about air quality without the Draft EIS? It seems like there already is information available that could be used.

Amy Edwards: Our intent was to split up the air quality issue discussion between two CAT meetings. The first meeting having the air quality discussion would cover the overall issues related to freeways. The second meeting would cover the air quality issues specific to this project. This matter is still open for discussion.

CAT Question: Why can't you do this until the Draft EIS is released?

Bill Vachon: There are different options that are being addressed so the study team has been advised by FHWA's Legal Sufficiency Division that we are not to release this information until they are satisfied with the content.

CAT Question: Then the Draft EIS should not be released. Can't they approve certain sections so that we can review the issues and comment on them before the Draft is released?

Bill Vachon: The Legal Sufficiency Division won't look at anything until there is a complete Draft EIS for them to review.

CAT Question: Can we send an invitation to Victor Mendez to attend and spend some time with us at a future CAT meeting?

Amy Edwards: I don't know what the process would be to do this.

Tom Keller: If that is the will of the body we can move on that.

CAT Comment: He should come and answer some of our questions. I think it would be beneficial for him to be seen working with the people on this project. I have a couple of questions for him and I am sure the new members have questions.

Tom Keller: Should he attend a certain meeting that would be more beneficial?

CAT Comment: He should attend sooner rather than later.

CAT Comment: I think he should attend the CAT meeting right before the Draft EIS is released.

CAT Comment: Yes, I agree.

CAT Comment: I think we should have a summary list of topics, so that when he comes, we can discuss those issues that are most important to us.

Amy Edwards: Such as air quality?

CAT Comment: It seems like one of the main issues is with air quality.

CAT Question: So can we send Victor Mendez an invitation?

CAT Comment: The invitation should be for him to attend before our third upcoming meeting.

Tom Keller: Is there a motion and a second?

CAT Comment: The ADOT Director's expertise may not be in the environmental area.

CAT Comment: We would be discussing a wide range of issues.

Tom Keller: All in favor?

(A vote was taken by the CAT members.)

Tom Keller: The motion carries 13 to 2.

CAT Comment: For our CAT meeting where there will be a discussion on the traffic issues, I would like to see a formal invitation extended to the Gila River Indian Community to present their long-range planning. I understand that we can't force them to make this presentation, but I would like us to send an invitation. I don't think anyone from the GRIC is here tonight.

Timothy Tait: They were here at the last CAT meeting.

CAT Comment: I mean tonight.

Tom Keller: Is there is a motion on the floor?

CAT Comment: I am making a motion that prior to our CAT meeting, where traffic will be discussed, we send an invitation for a representative from the GRIC to give a presentation to us regarding their long-range traffic planning concept.

Tom Keller: You would just like the presentation on traffic planning or all planning?

CAT Comment: All planning.

CAT Comment: Motion.

CAT Comment: Second.

Tom Keller: Would you like to have a discussion?

CAT Comment: It is a shame that the GRIC does not have a representative here on the CAT.

Tim Tait: I would like to clarify that the GRIC does have two positions on the CAT.

CAT Comment: I know that.

CAT Question: What is our official word about membership regarding no shows?

Tom Keller: If any member fails to attend 65% of the scheduled meeting the CAT can vote to have that member replaced. The people not in attendance at the CAT meetings still get the same phone calls and harassment as you.

CAT Question: You send this information only to the two representatives on the CAT?

Tom Keller: Yes, we send the information only to the two representatives.

CAT Comment: Maybe the invitation should be sent to the Planning Director.

Amy Edwards: ADOT has been in communication with GRIC staff and elected officials.

CAT Comment: Whoever needs to be in attendance should be invited.

Tom Keller: Is there a motion? Second? All in favor, all opposed?

(A vote was taken by the CAT members.)

Fred Erickson: There are 17 votes for and 0 against.

Tom Keller: Motion passes.

CAT Question: Can we discuss the alternatives summary that was distributed at the last CAT meeting?

Amy Edwards: Maybe we can hold that for the E1 discussion.

CAT Comment: The CAT meeting topics should cover the most critical issues. In the Western Section, floodplains were a major issue. There are a variety of topics that should be addressed in these meetings discussing the Eastern Section.

Amy Edwards: There is a large amount of information in the CAT summary and in the alternatives matrix. The CAT should have a separate meeting to address these issues. It is up to you how you want to proceed.

CAT Comment: There was a great amount of information in the items you described. When we were meeting on the Western Section alternatives, much of the discussion on the Eastern Section alternative issues was tabled. I don't feel that many of these topics were adequately discussed. Some things, such as land use is not as much of a concern. I think; however, the environmental concerns are extremely important. For us to only talk about the design and tunnel cuts just doesn't cut it. The Eastern Section meetings have been moving forward at a very fast pace. Our group has been waiting for some in-depth discussions about some of these issues, which we have not been getting and I feel that it has been a real disservice to the whole process. Some of the issues we should discuss are floodplains, air quality, biology, topography, cultural issues, and visual impacts.

Amy Edwards: The topics discussed in these meetings are completely up to the CAT members.

CAT Comment: I would also like to have a discussion on geology and soils, and irreversible retrieval of natural resources.

Tom Keller: Is there any more discussion on this matter?

CAT Question: Do you see these issues being discussed in one meeting or more?

Amy Edwards: For the issues regarding the mountain ridges and proposed cuts, I wonder if what we are showing as topics for the second upcoming CAT meeting should encompass what is happening with that issue. Maybe at the next CAT meeting, we should propose a series of additional meetings to you to discuss these additional issues that have been mentioned.

Tom Keller: So there is a motion that we take the additional issues mentioned and have additional CAT meetings to cover these topics?

Amy Edwards: We would get a list of additional issues back to you for approval.

CAT Comment: I would like to have a discussion about groundwater and hydrology.

Amy Edwards: Did you mean groundwater or surface water?

CAT Comment: I would like to discuss TCE plume groundwater contamination. I understand one of the cities just shut some wells down.

Tom Keller: Is there any other discussion?

CAT Question: Is there any room to discuss mitigation efforts? Can we discuss these items before the Draft EIS is released?

Amy Edwards: We haven't found out a way to release the Draft EIS potential mitigation options to the group for discussion.

CAT Comment: There has to be some preliminary work that could be discussed, such as a depressed freeway and drainage. We have already heard that a below-grade design would need to remove 750 homes. We should be able to discuss how this would impact the area.

Amy Edwards: The intention was to discuss that at a future CAT meeting.

CAT Question: I think another discussion item would be utilities that follow the proposed alignment and what would be impacted. Does this fall under mitigation?

Amy Edwards: That is a cost to the project.

CAT Question: I would just turn that issue over to the group. What about displacement and relocation?

CAT Comment: We should have a discussion about utility costs and incorporate this into an additional session.

CAT Question: I don't think it should be about costs, but more about the impacts. Is one more meeting going to be enough or should we have two more?

Tom Keller: We would come back with the issues you decide and have a logical plan to lay these meetings out. Are there any other issues?

CAT Comment: A discussion on utilities wouldn't be one of my biggest issues.

Tom Keller: Any more discussion on utilities?

CAT Question: It seems that when there is a discussion about cutting into the mountain, the subject of groundwater would come up. Wouldn't it?

Amy Edwards: The issues there would be water and power lines versus groundwater. The water lines are in the easement and we would not be in the easement.

CAT Comment: I think that should all be in the discussion regarding the mountain ridge and the cut. We can't avoid the conversation about why the alternative would be located there.

Tom Keller: The motion has been to bring additional topics to additional meetings.

CAT Question: Are you guys going to look at the increasing urban heat island? I think there should be a discussion on this. The urban heat island is changing the weather. Can this be a meeting topic?

Tom Keller: There is a motion for additional topics.

CAT Comment: One item is groundwater resources.

CAT Comment: Hydrology should be a topic discussion.

Tom Keller: What about utilities?

CAT Comment: I think that would fall under a discussion about the proposed freeway design.

CAT Comment: I would like to include having a discussion on the urban heat island and the design mitigation components.

Tom Keller: We have a motion to amend the future CAT meeting schedule based on the various issues recently discussed. All those in favor? All opposed?

(A vote was taken by the CAT members.)

Fred Erickson: 18 votes for and 0 opposed.

Tom Keller: At this point I would like to announce that Boy Scout Troup 77 from Ahwatukee has joined us. They are learning about public service. Welcome.

Amy Edwards: I am now going to give you an update about what happened with ADOT's recommendation of the South Mountain Freeway being aligned at 55th Avenue and Interstate 10 in the Western Section.

The study team had some discussion with business owners and with the tank farm. The tank farm handles and distributes fuel for the airport. Here is a picture of the tank farm.

(Picture of Tank Farm shown to CAT members)

The business owners that we talked with owned land between 51st and 57th avenues and Van Buren Street and the Union Pacific rail lines. The discussions covered a couple of issues. If the South Mountain Freeway alignment would go through the original alignment, safety would be an issue with it being so close to the tank farms. Another issue was that of security with the explosive jet fuel being so close to a potential freeway. Finally, the original freeway alignment would also be taking away the last developable land in the area. As you can see, there were many concerns. It was decided that there should be a more detailed analysis to see the options.

We were able to shift the proposed alignment 400 feet to remedy the concerns. Before doing this, we looked at the wide range of impacts that Mark Hollowell talked about earlier. One concern of the study team was that traffic operations would remain the same.

We had to be sensitive to the developed businesses that have been in place for quite some time. The construction costs would be essentially the same. The right-of-way costs would be higher. We had to consider the economic businesses of displaced companies. There could be five or six businesses that might be collocated in a property or quite a few more. We worked with the city and state departments of Homeland Security with their concerns about security and future development around the tank farm. We discovered that in the long term, this shift of the proposed freeway alignment suited the plan better. You will have a chance to see the background information for this shift when the Draft EIS is made available to you. Are there any questions?

CAT Question: It looks like the tank farm should be listed as a potentially hazardous site. Is it?

Amy Edwards: Most of what is showing up in the hazardous materials reports are sites that have had issues in the past, but have since been remediated. The technical summaries with this information are on the Web site.

CAT Question: On the aerial map you showed, can you see any of the fuel tanks?

Amy Edwards: On this blowup you can see the tanks. Here is one and there are a large number further to the east.

CAT Question: How close would they potentially be to the South Mountain Freeway?

Amy Edwards: I am unsure of the exact distance.

CAT Question: What would be the approximate distance that someone traveling in a car would be to the fuel tanks?

Amy Edwards: They would be about a block away.

CAT Question: There wouldn't be any tank displacements?

Amy Edwards: There are no planned tank displacements.

CAT Question: For those who don't know, these fuel tanks are bigger around than this room. The closest one to the proposed alignment contains Jet-A fuel. With this shift in the alignment, how many more businesses would be taken?

Amy Edwards: That is included in this total. (gesture to summary table on screen)

CAT Question: What happens when the number of lanes on the interchange is increased?

Amy Edwards: This has been included in our numbers. (gesture to summary table on screen)

CAT Question: On this section of I-10, the number of lanes seems to keep increasing. Will you be able to remain in the original footprint?

Amy Edwards: We haven't changed the amount of right-of-way needed. However, ADOT has initiated a project to look at this section of I-10 and identify long term needs. Are there any other questions?

(No response came from the CAT members.)

Tom Keller: We are 15 minutes behind.

Amy Edwards: Now I would like to discuss the E1 impacts. The matrix that was given to you during the discussion of the development of the SMCAT recommendation for the Western Section preferred alternative only contained the information for the Western Section. Since we are moving forward, we also wanted to give you something that has information on the E1 alternative. So this is the same information that you had before plus the E1 information. All of this information comes from the technical report summaries. You can access them from the Web site to see the detailed information. On the Web site, we have a summary of air quality that was presented to you when we were discussing the Western Section alternatives. However, this information is dated. Since that time, we have gathered more information.

CAT Comment: It would be better to have the summary so we could at least have some open discussions about it. The air quality summary needs to be updated and given to us.

Tom Keller: Is there a motion? Is there a second? All those for and all those against?

(A vote was taken by the CAT members.)

Fred Erickson: 16 vote for and 0 opposed.

Tom Keller: Motion passes.

CAT Comment: I didn't get this last time. I am concerned about this document having the Eastern Section alternative. I take great exception to some of these statements that are listed. I just want to know where this document is going to end up. I know we can't change the outcome but some of these statements of impact are not vetted out properly. I am trying to decide how this information will make its way to the Draft EIS. It is not accurate.

Amy Edwards: Anything we give to you is a public document.

CAT Question: Are these 10 pages ready to be rolled into the Draft EIS?

Amy Edwards: These pages are not in the Draft EIS.

CAT Comment: I don't care about the format. I care about the content. The content of this document makes it look like it is a slam dunk. Some of these statements can be challenged.

Amy Edwards: This document has gone through several reviews.

CAT Comment: My concern is whether these 10 pages are going into the Draft EIS.

CAT Comment: I think the concern is with the tone of the content and whether this will be reflected in the Draft EIS especially since this hasn't been discussed by our group. The content and tone is not reflective of the community.

CAT Question: When they say that is the impact. What about the discussion on visual resources? It doesn't discuss the level of impact. Every action taken for this freeway has an impact and this doesn't mention the level.

Tom Keller: Are you making a motion for how the document will be used going forward?

CAT Comment: The statements are very simplistic. There could be repercussions about our interests.

CAT Question: Can you evaluate that before there is a freeway design?

CAT Question: Can we withdraw this document from the public record?

Tom Keller: Where is this document currently located?

Amy Edwards: This is a summary document distributed to the CAT members for discussion purposes.

CAT Question: Is this in the Draft EIS?

Amy Edwards: Not word for word.

CAT Question: Is this content in the Draft EIS?

Amy Edwards: There is a summary of impacts in the Draft EIS. The Draft EIS has the complete documentation of how that summary was developed.

CAT Comment: The tone and extent of this analysis is not a documentation of the impact.

CAT Question: Can't we have another meeting and update this document with new answers? Most of the CAT members have been in the group longer than me. I understand that you can be frustrated about putting off the information and about the way this document is worded.

CAT Comment: The meeting to discuss this was after the fact and that is the frustration.

Amy Edwards: Would you like to discuss the tone of the Western Section as well as the Eastern Section? This was generated as a summary of the facts from our analysis. If you want to change the tone of what's listed in the E1 alternative then it will need to be done for the Western Section as well.

CAT Comment: I think that we are representing the public so we would like to see some documentation.

Amy Edwards: If you want to do your own work on this document and have it included as part of the DEIS—that is fine.

Tom Keller: Would you like to bring this forward as a motion?

CAT Comment: Yes.

CAT Comment: There are those individuals that have been doing this for awhile. It may be worth it for those who want to do this to draft something and bring it forward at another meeting.

CAT Question: When referencing this, were you looking at the visual quality? No one from the town of Laveen had any concerns about the visual impact. In my view, it is laid out identical. All they did was duplicate the text. I don't think they imposed any tone or lack of tone.

CAT Comment: I have the same problem with the visual quality. I represent a community which values what goes south of us.

CAT Comment: We call it the serpent.

Tom Keller: I am going to put a stop to this so the meeting doesn't go long. There are several motions out there. One is the motion of document being changed by the CAT. Would this be acceptable?

CAT Comment: This issue is that the summaries for the E1 alternatives have not been released and that these summaries were developed without the input from this group.

Tom Keller: When we cover the E1 alternatives, we can focus on that issue and document the specifics.

CAT Comment: We can do that, but our problem is that our input will not be a part of the Draft EIS.

Tom Keller: I can't answer that.

We are on to the last topic of the evening—the bus tour. I have a few logistical items to discuss with you. Fifteen CAT members have indicated that they will be attending. Is this correct? If you are one of the ones who haven't responded yet, please do so as soon as possible. I understand that a few people are still unsure if they will be attending, but if you do know if you can or can't attend and haven't responded, let us know tonight.

Fred Erickson: Please respond to us if you would like to participate in the hike, which will be a part of the bus tour, as well.

Timothy Tait: The bus tour is scheduled for Saturday, October 20. The bus will be leaving from our ADOT office at 17th Avenue and Madison Street. The tour is scheduled to last from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. We will not be having lunch, but we will be providing drinks and snacks. The bus will be air conditioned and will have a bathroom on board. As we travel the route, we will be showing the video of the virtual tour on overhead monitors.

CAT Question: So the bus will be leaving from the ADOT building where we have held some of these meetings?

Timothy Tait: Yes. We will also be sending you a map of the bus route we will be taking. The tour will begin at ADOT and will first proceed to the Eastern Section of the study area. At a certain location, a few colleagues and myself will be taking a hike. You are welcome to join us if you wish. After we view the Eastern Section, we will visit the Western Section, which includes looking at the area of the tank farms. Any questions?

(No questions came from the CAT members.)

Timothy Tait: Thank you

Tom Keller: Once again, let us know at your earliest convenience if you will be able to attend the bus tour. We have a number of cards from the visitors tonight.

CAT Question: I have a suggestion. Can the public read their question?

Tom Keller: I admit that last time; I did stumble through some of these.

CAT Question: What was the thought process of having the facilitator read the public questions? Since we only have a half hour for these questions, it may be smoother if the public reads their own questions.

CAT Comment: People should have the option if they want to read their questions.

CAT Comment: I second the motion.

Tom Keller: Any discussion?

CAT Question: So why has the facilitator read the questions in the past?

Tom Keller: Part of the reason for me reading them is because of time constraints.

CAT Question: Do you mean when someone has a question that can be answered as opposed to a statement?

Tom Keller: Yes.

Is there a motion?

(A vote was taken by the CAT members.)

Fred Erickson: 12 votes to 1.

Tom Keller: The motion carries.

Public Written Question¹: Date of DEIS to FHWA, AZ Div[ision]- is? Anticipated Date of submittal to FHWA San Francisco is?

Bill Vachon: As we mentioned earlier, those dates can't be determined at this time.

Public Written Question: Mr. Herzog talked of I-10 improvement between [Loop] #202 East and Riggs Road to the south for widening. What is happening with the proposed widening study begun in 2003 (at GRIC Community Center meetings) of I-10 from Rte 387 South to Ina Rd? This seems to have died an early death from the 2 meetings covered at GRIC in winter/spring 2003.

¹ Public written questions are typed verbatim, with the exception of text in brackets that has been added to assist in the reader.

Public Written Question: Re: Proposed (202)-Pecos RD Alignment: - In 2000 and 2001 according to the MAG website, they approved 8 'Route Alternatives' for the CANAMEX going thru Maricopa County – one short piece of road on these maps is labeled “SR202L”, showing up out of NOWHERE. Is this stretch of road, the SR202L, supposed to link up with the western end of the proposed 202 over Pecos Road?

Timothy Tait: Yes.

Public Written Question: Part of these “Alternative” routes show Riggs Rd, to Beltline to 19th Avenue, to SR202L. However, Riggs Rd and 19th Avenue show they're on Gila River land – if we cannot use Riggs, Beltline to 19th Avenue, then will that portion of routes be scrapped, and the SR202L and proposed 202 over Pecos Rd BECOME the ALTERNATIVE CANAMEX through our neighborhood?

Timothy Tait: The Loop 202 will not be a part of the CANAMEX Corridor. It will be Interstate 8 to State Route 85.

Public Written Question: Or, are you telling us there are 2 major highways proposed through this area??? 202 and CANAMEX???

Timothy Tait: The CANAMEX Corridor has nothing to do with the South Mountain Freeway.

CAT Member Written Question: Will the EIS include a discussion about hazardous air pollutants in addition to the criteria pollutants?

Mark Hollowell: Yes (answered one on one).

CAT Member Written Question: Will we have time to meet with our represented organizations, have necessary dialog to generate comments/recommendations that can be brought back to SMCAT before decisions are made?

Timothy Tait: The CAT will complete their meetings when the minimum 45-day comment period following the public release of the Draft EIS is completed. This is the window that the CAT will have to make their recommendation.

CAT Member Written Question: Will the CAT see and have a chance to review and comment on the DEIS before it is released to the public for comment?

Bill Vachon: This will not be the case. You will have access to the Draft EIS when it is released to the public. This is due to legal issues.

Public Written Question: Why was SMCAT not given a “no build” option when voting on the Western alignment? Will there be a “no build” option when voting on the Eastern alignment?

Bill Vachon: When the CAT was reviewing the Western Section alternatives, the decision was made to decide on one preferred alignment. For the CAT decision on the Eastern Section we are looking at either the Pecos Road alignment or no build since you can’t just build one section of the freeway without building the other.

Public Written Question: Since an Administrative Draft of the EIS is currently under review by the Federal Highway Administration and other governmental agencies what the purpose is and need of the SMCAT to continue to meet on the proposed South Mountain Freeway?

Public Written Question: What criteria is used by ADOT to determine which “Press Clippings” are included in the distribution to the CAT? For example are letters to the editor included in their packets?

Timothy Tait: We are documenting any articles that are written by reporters. We are not collecting any of the letters written to the editor of the newspapers.

Public Written Question: Which parts—if any of the five plus year old SMCAT meeting process will be included in the DEIS? Will any “Press Clippings” or Meeting “Summaries” be included?

Bill Vachon: The press clippings and meeting summaries will not be included in the Draft EIS. It will be a part of the official record, but not the Draft EIS.

Public Written Question: What specific plans does ADOT have to prevent the proposed SMF from being used by the CANAMEX truck traffic? The proposed SMF is about 50 miles shorter than using “recommended” corridor of Interstate 8 to SR 85, then SR 85 to I-10 and then I-10 to US Route 93?

Public Written Question: I don’t believe a “recommended” route or a “resolution” by MAG will motivate the 18-wheelers to take a 50 mile detour. ADOT needs to get real on this issue.

Timothy Tait: ADOT is working on getting the CANAMEX definition revised. We are making efforts to clarify the State of Arizona’s preference on the route.

Public Written Question: The 2004 election designated more than \$1 Billion (in 2004 dollars) for the construction of the SMF portion of Loop 202. How accurate is the dollar figure considering what has happened to construction materials cost, fuel, etc over the past three years and knowing that the projected completion date of the proposed SMF is 2015?

Public Written Comment: One of the generalizations that MAG/ADOT likes to make is that construction of the SMF reduces traffic on the surrounding arterial street network. Well to me that is like saying you can't drown in a river that averages two inches deep.

Case in point: Under the current design of the SMF 32nd Street will not be an access point. Per data from Kerry Wilcoxon, P.E. City of Phoenix the segment of the road from Pecos to Frey carried 8,100 vehicles per day in 2005. Knowing this traffic will need to go someplace as John Rodriguez from Lakewood between 32nd & 40th Street. Therefore the traffic will probably head back to Chandler to 40th Street and south to the SMF or vice versa—now that is another 8,000 cars per day.

Going east to 24th Street doesn't work any better as there is a three-way stop where Ray & Chandler Blvd. come together and then you need to make a left turn to get onto 24th Street. Liberty Lane going east past the DVHS is not a good option due to the location of an elementary and middle school.

Tom Keller: Are there any other questions?

CAT Question: Ahwatukee residents say that they are concerned about crime rates near freeways. Can we check the crime statistics in the Loop 202 in Chandler?

Tom Keller: Are you making a motion?

CAT Comment: It is a statistical fact that the closer you are located to a freeway the closer you are to crime.

CAT Comment: I would take any crime over being cut up and put into a trash can.

CAT Comment: It has nothing to do with the community that you are in, the bad guys are everywhere.

Tom Keller: The next CAT meeting is tentatively scheduled for December 13 at this location.

(Meeting adjourned at 8:44 p.m.)